

The William Wheaton House
County Road 50, East of Brown's Run
Hopewell Township *Near Greenwich*
Cumberland County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The William Wheaton House
County Road 50, East of Brown's Run
Hopewell Township
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Owner: Paul W. Flanigan

Dates of Erection: (1) ca. 1740; (2) ca. 1750;
(3) ca. 1780; (4) modern

Architect: Unknown

Builders: Isaac Wheaton Sr. (d. 1762), Isaac
Wheaton Jr. (d. 1803), and others
later

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: (1) One and one-half and cellar,
(2) two and one-half, and
(3) one story

Materials of Construction: Foundation - brick or
stone as per drawings

Exterior walls - eight
inch brick for center
unit, timber frame clap-
boarded for end units

Interior walls - brick
party walls, wood plank,
and wood panelled wains-
coting

Chimneys - brick, built
into inside of gable end
walls

Roof - gable, wood
shingled but partly
replaced by modern
asbestos

Historical Data:

Title to this property on the north side of Cohansey Creek has been traced back to the Isaac Wheaten of Hopewell Township, Cumberland County, who by his will dated 12 June 1761 and proved 22 March 1762^(a) devised to his wife Hannah the use of his plantation until their son Isaac arrived at age 21 years, at which time the executors were ordered to "put him into the full use and possession thereof". To another son John He devised lands on Stow Creek in the same County and in Swanzey, Mass. The testator was apparently identical with that Isaac Wheaten named as first of the three children in the will of Noah Wheaten* of Cohansey, blacksmith, dated 20 December 1715 and proved 14 April 1716, in which is devised a 200 acre farm at "Pen's Neck" (possibly the one here considered), a home farm and land in New England.^(b)

Isaac Wheaten Jr., the son and devisee named in the will of Isaac Wheaten of Hopewell Township, 12 June 1762, as abovesaid, died there intestate in 1803, and in the division of his real estate among his heirs in 1805, a tract of about 123 acres (on which stands the house here surveyed) was awarded to William Wheaten (as the surname had become spelled) for whom the place is now known. One Isaac Wheaten served as 2nd Lieutenant in Cumberland County Militia during the Revolution.

(a) New Jersey Archives, vol. 33, p. 472, Abstracts of Wills

* The Rev. Timothy Brooks with a number of fellow Baptists had come from Swanzey, Mass., about 1687 as first settlers at Bowentown and vicinity in this Hopewell Township, among whom was Noah Wheaten. (Cushing and Sheppard, Hist. of Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland Counties, publ. 1883, p. 512)

(b) New Jersey Archives, vol. 23, p. 501, Abstracts of Wills

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The last named William Wheaten in his will of 19 May 1876 devised (quote) To my son Isaac the farm where he now resides, containing about 120 acres more or less, situate in the Township of Hopewell. And this devisee, Isaac Wheaten, gave deed of 2 December 1882 conveying to Hannah Flanigan the same property, describing it as a tract less than a quarter mile in average width and extending northeast from Cohansey Creek nearly a mile and a quarter to the road leading from Youngs Mill to Dutch Neck (County Road 50), and as being bounded northwest by the lane to Daniel M. Sheppard's farm and southeast by the lane to Joseph Wheaton's house.

The grantee Hannah Flanigan by her will proved in Atlantic County, devised this property to Paul W. Flanigan, who is the owner at the time of our survey of the house, 1939.

Architectural Analysis:

Reached by a lane leading southwest from County Road No. 50, and situated east of Brown's Run, is discovered this very interesting four part house, the center two and one-half story unit of which is built of brick laid in flemish bond while the unit at each end of it is of frame construction, and all the result of four successive building operations.

The steeply gabled one and one-half story frame cottage forming the west end unit is obviously the original one. The present owner narrates tradition of its having been moved to this site, in which event the remarkable glazed brick chimney must have been rebuilt. In any case, the structure and its woodwork details indicate origin in the period 1730-50. It should be noted that a doorway in the north front has been changed to a window, as the vertical ends of patched clapboarding above and below it indicate. Likewise, the stairhall at that corner has been reduced by change in location of the partition between it and the first floor bedroom marked E on drawing No. 2.

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Flush with the north line of this cottage and extending some 22 feet from its east end, a cellarless two and one-half story brick unit three steps lower was added about the year 1750 to provide one large kitchen, dining room combination, and a bed chamber and stairhall above it. These two units of the house thus appear as having been built by or for the Isaac Wheaten who devised it by will in 1762 to his son Isaac Jr., as cited above in the account of the title to the property. Observe the curiously corbelled brick in the west gable end evidently so projected to follow the roof slope of the existing first unit.

The son Isaac Wheaten Jr. was evidently responsible for the third unit, a frame extension of some 15 Feet to the east end of this second unit, as its details indicate classification in the period between 1762 and 1803. Much more modern and unfortunate is the fourth operation which includes the one story sheds across the south front of the second and third units of the house.

The finish woodwork in the room marked B on the first floor plan is remarkably extensive, the whole west end being panelled from floor to ceiling in forming the fine mantelpiece and a large closet beside it, while even a panelled dado lines the other walls to the window sill height, all as detailed on sheets numbers 11 and 12. Chairrails and panelled chimney pieces in all other rooms are typical of pre-Revolutionary fashion in woodwork.

Lewis D. Cook
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer

